



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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July 12, 2007

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICIAL
SENTENCED ON BRIBERY AND EXTORTION CHARGES**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that in El Paso this morning, Santiago Efrain Valle, an Immigration Enforcement agent with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, was sentenced to 44 months in federal prison followed by three years of supervised release for bribery and extortion under color of law.

United States District Judge David Briones ordered Valle to self-surrender by September 14, 2007, to begin serving his prison sentence.

A jury in April found that Valle agreed to accept \$20,000 in exchange for dismissing pending criminal charges against and changing the detainee risk classification of Francisco Gutierrez-Avila, a detainee at the El Paso Service Processing Center. On March 16, 2007, federal agents arrested after he accepted \$20,000 from undercover officers. Valle was wearing his duty uniform at the time of his arrest.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Greg McDonald is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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